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OPERATIONS COORDINATING BOARD  
Washington 25, D.C.

October 7, 1957

MEMORANDUM OF MEETING: Working Group - Committee on Broadcasting and  
Television (COBAT)

30th Meeting held 10:00 A.M. October 4  
Conference Room 2040 HEW Building

Working Group Members Present:

USIA	- Mr. Robert E. Button, Chairman
State	- Mrs. Florence Dowling (alternate)
ICA	- Dr. Gerald Winfield
CIA	- Representative present
Defense	- Col. M. E. Williamson
OCB Staff	- Mr. Ralph Busick
	Marjorie Denny

Others Present: Major Stanley Rodby (Defense)  
Mr. Richard Black (State) representing TPIB

1. A paper was distributed to the members of COBAT supplying information on the World Wide Broadcasting System, Inc. This company owns and operates WRUL, the only privately owned and operated international broadcasting station in the United States. However, although ostensibly public enterprise, WRUL operates under a subsidy of \$350,000 in the USIA budget and USIA supervises its programs directed to Latin America. The Chairman felt that government agencies involved in international broadcasting should be aware of the possibility of the sale of the facilities of WRUL, as the U.S. Government would not want this station to get into the wrong hands. An inventory of WRUL facilities will be prepared before discussion of this item at the next meeting.

2. The Chairman discussed the possible need for a psychological warfare operation directed toward North Vietnam. A paper will be prepared for the next meeting recommending that such a program be initiated. There have been indications that the Defense Department might be interested in such an operation but the stumbling block has been the number of foreign troops in Vietnam. The Defense member agreed to present his Department's views on this subject at the next meeting.

3. The institution of a ham operator show for the Curtain areas, as a source of certain information of interest to various agencies was next discussed. The VOA had a 15 minute "ham" show for nearly four years, but it can no longer afford such a program. It is therefore now asking for support from another agency for a few minutes on its worldwide English broadcast to be devoted to the interests of ham operators around the world. This was an extremely popular program and, in the view of the Chairman, is the type of thing which should be kept open as a people-to-people contact; additionally, such a program should be supported for technical-monitoring purposes.

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4. Copies of a paper on "Off-hour use of VOA transmitters" were distributed for exploration and discussion at the next meeting. This paper suggests that RFE and RLN might use certain VOA shortwave transmitters not now being fully utilized by VOA

5. The Chairman spoke of COBAT's need to establish a basic position on television. The Jackson Committee recommended that the U.S. should be prepared to provide assistance to television industries in other countries while those industries are in their formative stages. COBAT was therefore set up as an inter-agency committee expressly for this purpose. But in order to carry out the Jackson Committee recommendation, it is necessary that each member agency establish its own position in the television field. A paper on this subject will be prepared for discussion at the next meeting.

6. The discussion of East-West program exchange was stricken from the agenda because this subject is being considered by the Working Group for Radio and TV Exchange (the Merrill Committee), an ad hoc group set up under the OCB Special Committee on Soviet and Related Problems.

7. The ICA Representative reported on the development of a transistor receiver which will operate in the standard bands on four flashlight batteries. The total cost of the parts of this receiver is \$13.11, which puts it within the buying power of the upper half of the population of developing countries such as Vietnam, Libya and Ethiopia. ICA is making arrangements for the manufacture of these receivers by private industry in countries developing indigenous radio systems. It is attempting to see that export rights are restricted, that some profit control is set up, and that manufacture shall not be on a monopoly basis in any country. The implications of developing indigenous systems on standard bands were discussed.

8. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved. The next meeting will be at the call of the Chairman.

  
Ralph R. Busick  
Staff Representative

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